A letter from Lawyer Chadwick dated August 21, 1882, accompanied a note from Palmer's brother (lost?) and a copy of a letter to Chadwick from Palmer's mother. Regarding the letter from Palmer's brother, Chadwick assumes (correctly, it seems) that "you look over letters to patients before allowing them to be delivered to them." The absence of the letter suggests that Dr. Lett (acting in Clark's absence) examined it and passed it on. As for the letter from Palmer's mother, Chadwick solicits Dr. Lett's opinion.

The copy of this letter remains in the file. In it Mrs. Palmer expresses her shock at the news she received from Power Palmer about his brother's illness. She had noticed her son's evident "mania" for land in his last letter, and expresses her regret that it might all be lost. She "trusts," indicating some misgivings and suggesting also that Palmer had a history of trouble, that Palmer was not confined because "that sort of thing always had such a bad eff ect on him, & his immense stock of animal strength & spirits required such constant air & exercise to keep him all right." A line has been drawn in the margin beside this passage, as if Dr. Lett read it and took it very seriously.

She attributes her son's illness to a combination of overwork at College and the effect of a serious injury he sustained from a "violent blow" playing hurley. This "seemed somehow to alter the shape of his head" and also accounts for the scarred eye which it "nearly destroyed." His condition seems to have been aggravated by "company that did not suit," which must have been dangerous given his desire "to marry every pretty girl he met."

From the mother's account one gathers the impression of a young man with the dangerous combination of a strong nature and a judgement impaired by organic injury. One must also suspect, probably as a consequence of the two, the onslaught of incurable syphilis. Mrs. Palmer hopes that "some good experienced attendant ... who would also be a kindly companion" in "a healthy country place" might restore her son's health. One might also perceive in the texts themselves the emergence of a tragic opposition between the young man and the open spaces he has such affinity and enthusiasm for, and his destiny of confinement in an insane asylum.

For in his reply to Lawyer Chadwick's letter of August 21, acknowledging his receipt of the copy of Mrs. Palmer's letter, Dr. Lett reacts rather negatively to her proposal: "The kind of treatment which she suggests is at present out of the question." Dr. Lett's argument for confining Palmer is also a defense and a